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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**H. R.** \_\_\_\_\_

To prohibit the use of Federal funds to launch a nuclear weapon using an autonomous weapons system that is not subject to meaningful human control, and for other purposes.

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**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Mr. LIEU introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee  
on \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**A BILL**

To prohibit the use of Federal funds to launch a nuclear weapon using an autonomous weapons system that is not subject to meaningful human control, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the Block Nuclear Launch  
5       by Autonomous Artificial Intelligence Act of 2023.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress finds the following:

1           (1) Department of Defense Directive 3000.09  
2       defines “autonomous weapons system” as a weapons  
3       system that, once activated, can select and engage  
4       targets without further intervention by an operator.

5           (2) Article 3, clause 8 of the United Nations  
6       Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons pro-  
7       hibits the indiscriminate use of weapons, which is  
8       defined as “any placement of such weapons...which  
9       may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian  
10      life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or  
11      a combination thereof, which would be excessive in  
12      relation to the concrete and direct military advan-  
13      tage anticipated”.

14          (3) Section 5.10 of the Department of Defense  
15      Law of War Manual states “[c]ommanders, at all  
16      levels, have a great responsibility to exercise the  
17      leadership necessary to reduce the risk of harm to  
18      civilians and civilian objects”.

19          (4) In a report on autonomous weapons systems  
20      published on December 1, 2021, Human Rights  
21      Watch and the International Human Rights Clinic  
22      of Harvard Law School argue that “[r]obots lack  
23      the compassion, empathy, mercy, and judgment nec-  
24      essary to treat humans humanely, and they cannot  
25      understand the inherent worth of human life”.

1           (5) The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review states  
2           “[i]n all cases, the United States will maintain a  
3           human ‘in the loop’ for all actions critical to inform-  
4           ing and executing decisions by the President to ini-  
5           tiate and terminate nuclear weapon employment”.

6           (6) The National Security Commission on Arti-  
7           ficial Intelligence, established by Congress pursuant  
8           to section 1051 of the National Defense Authoriza-  
9           tion Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–  
10          232), recommends that the United States “clearly  
11          and publicly affirm existing U.S. policy that only  
12          human beings can authorize employment of nuclear  
13          weapons and seek similar commitments from Russia  
14          and China”.

15          (7) On February 16, 2023, the Department of  
16          State issued a Political Declaration on Responsible  
17          Military Use of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomy,  
18          which includes the following statement: “States  
19          should maintain human control and involvement for  
20          all actions critical to informing and executing sov-  
21          ereign decisions concerning nuclear weapons”.

22          (8) Large-scale nuclear war would lead to the  
23          deaths of millions of people, firestorms, radioactive  
24          fallout contamination, agricultural failure, and cata-  
25          strophic climate results.

1           (9) To comply with international humanitarian  
2       law, human control and human legal judgment are  
3       essential in the nuclear command and control proc-  
4       ess.

5 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

6       It is the sense of Congress that—

7           (1) the use of lethal, autonomous nuclear weap-  
8       ons systems that are not subject to meaningful  
9       human control cannot properly adhere to inter-  
10      national humanitarian law; and

11          (2) any decision to launch any nuclear weapon  
12      should not be made by artificial intelligence.

13 **SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS TO DE-**  
14 **PLOY NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH AUTONO-**  
15 **MOUS WEAPONS SYSTEMS NOT SUBJECT TO**  
16 **MEANINGFUL HUMAN CONTROL.**

17      (a) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds authorized to  
18      be appropriated or otherwise made available for any fiscal  
19      year may be obligated or expended to use an autonomous  
20      weapons system that is not subject to meaningful human  
21      control to—

22          (1) launch a nuclear weapon; or

23          (2) select or engage targets for the purposes of  
24      launching a nuclear weapon.

25      (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1           (1) The term “autonomous weapons system”  
2       has the meaning given such term in Department of  
3       Defense Directive 3000.09, titled “Autonomy in  
4       Weapons Systems” as in effect on the date of the  
5       enactment of this Act.

6           (2) The term “meaningful human control”  
7       means, with respect to an autonomous weapons sys-  
8       tem, human control of—

9                   (A) the selection and engagement of tar-  
10           gets; and

11                   (B) the time, location, and manner of use.